

1953



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ANNUAL REPORT
of the
Medical Officer of Health
for the
Borough of
Clifton [Dartmouth Hardness]

W. H. AUCUTT, M.B., Ch.B.

Acting Medical Officer of Health

V. E. HUGHES, M.S.I.A., A.R.S.I.,

Sanitary Inspector,

Meat and Foods Inspector, Etc.

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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for 1953

*To the Worshipful the Mayor and Aldermen and Councillors
of the Borough of Clifton Dartmouth Hardness.*

Mr. Mayor, Lady, Councillor and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1953 in accordance with the instructions of the Minister of Health.

This year has seen the retirement, due to ill-health, of Dr. Andrew Dick, who has been your Medical Officer since 1939. The upheaval of the second great war, and the far-reaching post-war changes in our health and social services made his period of office one of strain and difficulty, and it is to Dr. Dick's credit that the health of this ancient Borough has steadily improved during these years.

This year, the Death Rate has again fallen—from 15.62 per 1,000 population in 1952 to 12.81 per 1,000 population, and the Standardised Death Rate is now 10.76 which compares favourably with the Death Rate for England and Wales as a whole.

The main causes of death were:—

1. Cancer—17 deaths.
2. Vascular lesions of the Nervous System—14 deaths.
3. Heart Diseases—10 deaths.

There has been a slight rise in the deaths due to respiratory conditions (Influenza, Pneumonia, Bronchitis, etc.) of which there were nine this year.

The Birth Rate has fallen from 15.08 per 1,000 population to 12.13 per 1,000 population, a rate which is more usual for Dartmouth.

Apart from the normal biennial outbreak of Measles, of which 170 cases were notified in the month of March alone, there was no serious epidemic disease.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area

Based on the Registrar General's figures

1.

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	...	1925
Population—census 1951 (April)	...	...	...	...	...	6707
Registrar-General's estimated resident population	...	...	...	...	...	...
1952	...	...	...	...	...	5834
Registrar-General's estimated resident population	...	...	...	...	...	...
1953	...	...	...	...	...	5853
Number of inhabited houses, 1952	...	...	...	...	...	1763
Number of inhabited houses, 1953	...	...	...	...	...	1774
Rateable value	...	...	...	...	...	£55,073
Sum represented by 1d. rate	...	...	...	...	...	£219

2.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the year

	Total	Male	F'male
Live Births	71	37	34
Legitimate	70	36	34
Illegitimate	1	1	0
Still Births	3	2	1
Legitimate	3	2	1
Illegitimate	0	0	0
Crude Birth Rate per thousand estimated resident population			12.13
Comparability Factor			1.15
Corrected Birth Rate			13.94
	Total	Male	F'male
Deaths	75	43	32
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population			12.81
Comparability Factor			0.84
Standardised Death Rate			10.76
Deaths from diseases and accidents of pregnancy and child-birth :			
Puerperal Sepsis			0
Other Puerperal Causes			0
	Total	Male	F'male
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age	0	0	0
Legitimate	0	0	0
Illegitimate	0	0	0
Deaths of infants under 4 weeks of age	0	0	0
Legitimate	0	0	0
Illegitimate	0	0	0
Death rate of infants per 1,000 live births			0

Causes of Death during 1952

	Total	Male	F'male	
Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	1	1	0	
Other Forms of Tuberculosis	0	0	0	
Syphilitic disease	0	0	0	
Diphtheria	0	0	0	
Whooping Cough	0	0	0	
Mening-coccal infections	0	0	0	
Acute Poliomyelitis	0	0	0	
Measles	0	0	0	
Other inf. and parasitic dis.	0	0	0	
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	4	3	1	
" " lung, bronchus	1	0	1	
" " breast	0	0	0	
" " uterus	1	0	1	
Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasms	11	6	5	
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	0	0	0	
Diabetes	1	1	0	
Vascular lesions of nervous system ...	14	7	7	
Coronary disease, angina	13	9	4	
Hypertension with heart disease ...	0	0	0	
Other heart disease	7	3	4	
Other circulatory disease	3	2	1	
Influenza	2	0	2	
Pneumonia	4	3	1	
Bronchitis	2	2	0	
Other diseases of respiratory system ...	1	1	0	
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum ...	0	0	0	
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ...	1	0	1	
Nephritis and nephrosis	0	0	0	
Hyperplasia of prostate	0	0	0	
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	0	0	
Congenital malformations	0	0	0	
Other defined and ill-defined diseases ...	5	2	3	
Motor vehicle accidents	0	0	0	
All other accidents	2	1	1	
Suicide	2	2	0	
Homicide and operations of war ...	0	0	0	
All causes	Total	75	43	32

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

Full details of the sanitary circumstances are given in the report of the Sanitary Inspector.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Milk

Samples taken by the Sanitary Inspector, are examined and reported upon by the Public Health Laboratory Service at Exeter.

Periodic sampling for presence of Tubercle infection was continued throughout the year.

Ice Cream

Examination of samples by the Public Health Laboratory Service at Exeter has continued. Ice Cream is graded as follows:—

Provisional Grade	Time taken to reduce Methylene Blue	Interpretation
1.	4½ hours or more	Satisfactory
2.	2½ to 4 hours	Fair
3.	½ to 2 hours	Unsatisfactory
4.	0	Very Bad

Your Officers investigate and advise in all cases where satisfactory results are not obtained. It should be noted that the chemical and bacteriological testing of ice cream remains yet on trial in a scientific sense and has not reached that stage of being able to be used in taking of statutory action.

Meat

It is still satisfactory to note that the percentage of tuberculosis meat found upon meat inspection at the Abattoir continues to decline. The procedure always adopted as a safeguard against tuberculosis infecting milk supply is detailed by the Sanitary Inspector in his notes upon Meat Inspection. In the past prompt steps have been taken to ensure that any such suspected milk, raw and untreated, will, without delay, cease to be distributed in the borough.

Water Supplies

Supply has been adequate. Chlorination has been continued at the main source as a final treatment after filtration. By maintaining a relatively high dosage of chlorine, the Water Engineer has continued to obtain a final satisfactory drinking water, and I am indebted to him for copies of the bacteriological reports from samples which he has taken monthly.

There are 46 properties scattered about the Borough which get their supply of water from private sources. The majority of these sources of supply are from springs or shallow wells situated invariably on agricultural land and are, with the exception of one, unfiltered and unchlorinated. Numerous samples taken throughout the year have revealed very little evidence of bacterial contamination, except as a temporary seasonal occurrence as a result of certain states of ground and weather: the danger of contamination can never be put complacently out of mind in such conditions and from these sources.

Housing

Housing details and visits made are noted in the report by the Sanitary Inspector. Additional visits have been made by your Medical Officer in connection with applications for rehousing recommended upon medical grounds by certificates from general medical practitioners. Visits have also been paid to see Aged People and inspect their housing conditions in connection with your statutory duties under the National Assistance Act.

There were 7 cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis notified. There were 50 cases of tuberculosis on the Register at the end of the year.

Since Dr. Dick's retirement in November, I have been acting as your Medical Officer until his successor took up his duties, and I wish to acknowledge the support and encouragement which I have received from Mr. Hughes, the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

W. H. AUCUTT, M.B., Ch.B.,

Acting Medical Officer of Health.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Sanitary Inspector

To The Worshipful the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors

Mr. Mayor, Lady Councillor and Gentlemen,

I herewith submit my report for the year ending the 31st December, 1953.

SECTION D

HOUSING

1.—INSPECTION OF DWELLING-HOUSES DURING THE YEAR:—

- | | | | |
|-----|-----|--|-----|
| (1) | (a) | Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under the Public Health Act or Housing Acts) | 177 |
| | (b) | Number of inspections made for the purpose | 565 |
| (2) | (a) | Number of dwelling-houses (included in the sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 and 1932 | 0 |
| (3) | | Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | 2 |
| (4) | | Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | 102 |

2.—REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	76
--	----

3.—ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR:—

- (a) Proceedings, under Section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:—
- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring repairs | 0 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal Notices: | |
| (a) By Owners | 0 |
| (b) By Local Authority in default of owners | 0 |
- (b) Proceedings under the Public Health Acts:—
- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requesting defects to be remedied | 0 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal Notices:— | |
| (a) By Owners | 0 |
| (b) By Local Authority in default of owners | 0 |
- (c) Proceedings under Section 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:—
- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | 0 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | 3 |
- (d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.—
- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made | 2 |
| (2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit | 0 |

4.—HOUSING ACT, 1936, PART VI. OVERCROWDING

- | | |
|--|----|
| (a) (1) Number of dwelling-houses overcrowded at the end of the year | 3 |
| (2) Number of families dwelling therein | 4 |
| (3) Number of persons dwelling therein | 18 |

(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	4
(c) (1)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	1
(2)	Number of persons concerned in such cases	9
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have once again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	0
(e)	Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report ...	0

COMPLAINTS

151 complaints were received and dealt with during the year.

177 Houses were inspected under the Public Health and Housing Acts.

ABRIDGED SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED AND INSPECTED

Roofs	15
External Walls	19
Internal Plastering	13
Ceilings	2
Floors	8
Windows	6
Fireplaces	2
Doors	1
Chimneys	3
Premises cleansed	21
Bins provided	5

DRAINAGE

Inspections made	71
Tests carried out	31
Drains repaired	41
Gullies provided or renewed	10
Sinks	8
Rainwater pipes and gutters	15
Water closets provided, repaired or renewed ...	15
New drains laid (excluding new properties) ...	16
Inspection chambers built or repaired	19

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

(a) MILK SUPPLY

There are five dairies registered in the Borough, one of which is equipped with a holder type pasteurisation plant. During the year the Borough was included in The Milk (Special Designations) (Specified Areas) (No. 2) Order, 1953. Under this order only specially designated milk can be sold. From the coming into operation of the order all producer retailers were obliged to have their herds tuberculin tested or to send their milk for heat treatment. No undue dislocation of distribution was experienced during the transitional period. Owing to an epidemic amongst the guinea pigs at the Public Health Laboratory it was not possible to submit samples of milk for the tuberculin test for several months, the total number submitted during the year was therefore lower than the previous year, being 19 against 34. All the samples submitted for this test were returned negative. 35 samples were submitted for the methylene blue test, 27 of these passed, 4 were spoilt in transit and 4 which failed were referred to the County Milk Production Officer for investigation.

(b) FOOD PREMISES

Food premises were visited as frequently as other essential duties allowed. Altogether 558 visits were made during the year. The number of premises dealing in food being 85. The general standard of cleanliness was good. Only 9 notices were found necessary, all of which were promptly complied with. It is worthy of note that some food premises which had in the past been infested with rats or mice, have by a combination of treatment by the Public Health Department staff and advice on methods of proofing, been completely cleared.

Visits made were as follows:—

Market and Stalls	...	...	...	...	...	...	41
Cafes	...	...	...	...	...	...	30
Bakehouses and Confectioners	...	...	...	...	...	...	58
Hotels	...	...	...	...	...	...	56
Ice Cream Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	69
Wet and Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Canteens	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Butchers	...	...	...	...	...	...	64
Fruit and Grocery	...	...	...	...	...	...	95
Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	...	72
Meat Depot	...	...	...	...	...	...	7

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed ...	879	358	207	4385	561
Number inspected ...	879	358	207	4385	561

ALL DISEASES

EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS

Whole carcasses condemned ...	4	3	21	34	7
Carcases of which some part of organ was condemned ...	337	200	4	653	86
Percentage of the number inspected af- fected with disease other than Tuberculosis ...	38.7	56.7	12.0	15.6	16.5

TUBERCULOSIS ONLY

Whole carcasses condemned ...	4	3	—	—	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	39	43	—	—	22
Percentage of the number inspected af- fected with Tuberculosis ...	4.8	12.8	—	—	4.1

MEAT INSPECTION

All slaughtering done during the year was confined to the Municipal Abattoir controlled by the Ministry of Food. One privately owned slaughterhouse has been used by W.M.S.A. as a meat depot and has been maintained in a hygienic manner. The Dartmouth Abattoir supplies home killed meat to this Borough, Kingswear, Salcombe U.D.C., Kingsbridge U.D.C., and Kingsbridge R.D.C. The latter authority have co-operated well in providing a relief meat inspector during leave periods of the Dartmouth Borough Inspector. The Abattoir has been well maintained during the year and is kept constantly clean by a full-time caretaker. During the year 6,390 animals were dealt with and a hundred per cent post mortem inspection was achieved. The incidence of tuberculosis in cows shewed quite a considerable decline, being 12.8 per cent against 17.1 per cent the previous year. In cattle the percentage remained practically the same. Co-operation with The Animal Health Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has continued throughout the year. Although several cases of *Cyticercus bovis* were discovered the total number was less than the previous year. All organs or parts found affected were destroyed and the remainder sent for treatment before being released.

All condemned meat or offal is dyed to indicate that it is unfit for human consumption and is then disposed of to reputable firms who sterilise and convert it to animal feeding meals and fertilisers.

OTHER UNSOUND FOOD CONDEMNED AND DESTROYED

Tinned Milk	16 lbs.	Corned Beef	6 lbs.
Luncheon Meat	14 lbs.	Chocolate Marshmallow	
Cherries	29½ lbs.		8 lbs.
Plums	142 lbs.	Beans	1½ lbs.
Pork	20½ lbs.	Gooseberries	2 lbs.
Spaghetti	5 lbs.	Tomatoes	8 lbs.
Beef Loaf	5 lbs.	Carrots	2 lbs.
Beans	3 lbs.	Pears	6 lbs.
Steak	19 lbs.	Salmon	½ lb.
Damsons	5 lbs.	Brawn	9 lbs.
Apples	2 lbs.	Beef Sausage	18 lbs.
Peaches	3 lbs.	Golden Syrup	2 lbs.
Grapefruit	1 lb.	Cream	¼ lb.
Jellied Veal	24 lbs.	Coffee	¼ lb.
Peas	35 lbs.		

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT., 1938

Foods submitted for analysis during the year were as follows:—

- Ten samples of milk all genuine.
- One sample of beef sausage genuine.
- One sample of Reviton Tonic genuine.
- One sample of Dripping genuine.
- One sample of Margarine genuine
- One sample of Whiskey genuine.
- One sample of Brandy genuine.

A sample of ice cream was found to be 6 per cent deficient in milk solids. A warning letter was sent to the vendor. One sample of milk was 5 per cent deficient in fat. A warning letter was sent to the vendor.

A sample of hot milk was found to contain 7 per cent added water. A fine of 5/- and 2 guineas costs was imposed.

ICE CREAM

The following samples were submitted to the County Laboratory:—

Total	Grade 1. Satisfactory	Grade 2. Fair	Grade 3. Unsatisfactory	Grade 4. Very bad	Spoilt in transit
27	12	8	2	2	3

69 visits were made in connection with the sale, manufacture or storage of ice cream. There are 17 registered premises dealing in this commodity only two of which are manufacturing, the remainder getting supplies from sources outside the town. Unsatisfactory samples were investigated at the place of manufacture. Hygiene was generally well maintained.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 AND 1948
 PART 1 OF THE ACT

Inspection for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspector)

Premises	M/C line No.	Number on Register	Inspections	No. of		M/C line No.
				Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(i) Factories in which Secs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...	1	4	14	—	—	1
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ...	2	40	37	1	—	2
(iii) Other Premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises ...	3	—	—	—	—	3
Total ...	—	44	51	1	—	—

CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	M/C line No.	Number of cases in which defects were found		No. of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted	M/C line No.
		Found	Remedied Referred		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Want of Cleanliness (51) ...	4	1	1	—	—
Overcrowding (52) ...	5	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temperature (53) ...	6	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation (54) ...	7	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of Floors (56) ...	8	—	—	—	—

Particulars	M/C line No.	Number of cases in which defects were found			No. of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted	M/C line No.	
		Found	Remedied	Referred			
							To H.M. Inspector
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Sanitary Conveniences (57)							
(a) Insufficient ...	9	—	—	—	—	—	9
(b) Unsuitable or defective ...	10	2	1	—	—	—	10
(c) Not separate for sexes ...	11	—	—	—	—	—	11
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork) ...	12	—	—	—	—	—	12
Total ...	60	3	2	—	—	—	60

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949 REPORT FOR 15 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1954

	Type of Property				
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agri-cultural	All other (including Business Premises)	TOTAL
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
I. Total number of properties in Local Authority's District (Notes 1 and 2)	10	1764	20	404	2198
II. Number of properties inspected by the Local Authority during the 15 months ended 31st March, 1954, as a result of (a) notification (b) survey (c) otherwise e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose (Notes 1, 2 and 3)	(a) — (b) 2 (c) 6	45 150 25	1 19 —	25 91 10	71 262 41
III. Number of properties inspected (See Section II.) which were found to be infested by rats (Notes 1, 2 and 3) ...	Major 2 Minor 1	— 21	1 —	1 7	4 29
IV. Number of properties inspected (See Section II.) which were found to be seriously infested by mice (Notes 1, 2 and 3)	3	19	—	9	31

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949—Cont.

	Type of Property				TOTAL
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agri-cultural	All other (including Business Premises)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
V. Number of infested properties (See Sections III. and IV.) treated by the Local Authority (Notes 1, 2 and 3)	6	40	1	17	64
VI. Number of notices served under Section 4: (1) Treatment (2) Structural Works (<i>i.e.</i> Proofing)	—	—	1	—	1
VII. Number of cases in which default action was taken by the Local Authority following the issue of a notice under Section 4	—	1	—	4	5
VIII. Legal proceedings (see overleaf)	—	—	—	—	—
IX. Number of 'block' control schemes carried out	21				

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

One operator is employed and works alternate weeks at Dartmouth and Brixham. This arrangement has worked well and infestations have been kept well under control. On the retirement of Mr. W. G. Harris in October, Mr. H. P. Humpherson was appointed as operator, and the work carried on without interruption. One maintenance treatment of the sewers was carried out and no infestation was discovered.

SCHOOLS

All the milk supplied to schools was pasteurised and samples taken throughout the year were satisfactory.

The water supply to all the schools is from the town's chlorinated supply.

The cooking centre for school meals has always been found on inspection to be well maintained. The standard of hygiene has been most satisfactory and a credit to the Manageress, Miss E. C. Smith.

DISINFECTION

The new Thresh steam disinfector has proved very satisfactory. During the year over 100 articles were treated, most of these were for private persons or other authorities where the cost of treatment was recoverable.

RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

There remains only one Registered User of Rag Flock and other filling materials for upholstery. Supplies are obtained from licenced premises outside the Borough. No samples were taken during the year.

SHOPS ACT, 1950

Periodic inspections under the Act have been carried out. It was found necessary to issue warnings to five shopkeepers in connection with Sunday trading.

PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES

A very careful watch has been kept of the 46 premises in the town which draw water from private unchlorinated supplies. All these are from shallow wells or springs which are liable to pollution. Altogether 89 samples were taken and submitted to The Public Health Laboratory. The majority were satisfactory, but some cases of pollution were discovered and it became necessary to warn consumers to boil the water. It is hoped that with the extension of the South Devon Water Board's supply into the town some of the unsatisfactory supplies will be eliminated.

PETROLEUM AND EXPLOSIVE ACTS

Number of licenses granted to store Petroleum ...	11
Number of licenses granted to store Mixed Explosives	11

GAME DEALERS' LICENSES

There were three licenses granted during the year authorising the dealing in game.

In conclusion I should like to thank the Council and my colleagues in other departments, particularly the Borough Engineer and his staff for their help and co-operation throughout the year.

I am, Madam and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

V. E. HUGHES, M.S.I.A., A.R.S.I.,

Sanitary Inspector,
Meat and Foods Inspector, Etc.

Chronicle
(*Printers*),
Dartmouth

